

**Carly Delsigne**  
**on behalf of**  
**the Montana Library Association**

Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on Education  
Public Testimony  
January 17, 2013

Chairman Hollandsworth and Members of the Committee:

For the record, my name is Carly Delsigne. I am Director of the Clancy Library.

I stand in support of the Governor's budget for the Montana State Library and urge you to consider the direct impact any budget reductions will have on provision of quality library services and Montanans access to information resources.

The Montana State Library budget includes an inflationary increase for Statewide Databases costs. The robust Montana Statewide Databases are made available through the Montana State Library and provides e-content across disciplines at no cost to **all** public, school, academic and special Montana libraries.

Resources accessible through our statewide online databases package gives every Montanan a chance to succeed, including our underserved and disadvantaged populations. All of these e-resources are invaluable to those attending the Montana Digital Academy, Montana's online learning center, K-12 students, home schooled students, college/university students, those seeking employment, or even those who need access to auto repair resources.

In Fiscal Year 2012, a total of 761 Montana libraries provided Montanans free access to these statewide databases. Nearly 6.5

million searches were performed. In the first six months of this fiscal year, there has already been over 695,000 sessions conducted.

As a library director I use the databases every day. I help my patrons access everything from information about the diagnosis their doctor gave them TO Consumer Reports on the best cell phone TO small engine repair help for their ailing lawn mower.

We are coming into one of my favorite seasons as a librarian: Science Fair! Each year I have many of the same kids come in to do research for this year's Science Fair project—and many of them go straight for the databases to find, learn, design, and then write about their projects.

Last month, one of our high school patrons came in to research a debate topic about the purpose and function of America's prison system. It was a tougher topic than I would have imagined to find resources for. We used the Point of View database to find exceptionally good articles that laid out the arguments for and against rehabilitation, parole, and protection of society.

Bottom line—I need the databases the Montana State Library provides in order to serve my patrons well. These databases provide critical information and resources that my patrons can't do without.

As reflected in the State Library's budget request, current funding through the Coal Severance Tax Fund does not allow the Montana State Library to keep pace with inflationary costs and without these additional funds, the State Library would be forced to reduce the number of databases available to Montana libraries and patrons.

The Statewide Databases package is an example of cost-effective resource sharing at its best, providing equal access to information for all Montanans.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today. I urge you to maintain and grow the state's investment in public library services by voting "do pass" on HB2 for the Montana State Library.